



Gulf Herb Society Coast Newsletter

May
2024

Mailing Only: 109 Grand Blvd • Mobile, AL 36607 • www.gulfcoastherbsociety.org

Rosemary for Remembrance DATES

- **May 28, 5:30 pm.** GCHS Meeting at MBG
 - **June 25, 5:30 pm.** GCHS Meeting at MBG
- See calendar page at the end of the newsletter for complete details.

Thymely NOTES

[Click Here to find us on Facebook!](#) Read herb tips, recipes, and see pictures from our latest events.

- Please **volunteer** in the herb garden whenever you can. Contact Pat Ivie peivie@comcast.net, 334-315-5874 for info.
- A membership form is at the end of the Newsletter. Make checks payable to GCHS - \$25.00.

Did You KNOW

HERB OF THE MONTH: Types Of Lavender: Difference Between French And English Lavender
gardeningknowhow.com

When it comes to French vs. English lavender there are some important differences. Not every lavender plant is the same, although they are all great to grow in the garden or as houseplants. Know the differences between these popular types to choose the best one for your conditions and needs.

Are English and French Lavender Different? – They are related, but different types of lavender. French lavender is *Lavandula dentata* and it is not actually that commonly cultivated, although we often think of France when picturing fields of lavender. English lavender is *Lavandula angustifolia*. This variety is much more commonly cultivated and is typical in gardens and containers. Here are some other important differences: Hardiness. A big difference between French and English lavender is that the latter is much hardier. French lavender is only hardy through about zone 8 and won't tolerate cold winters. Size. French lavender is large and will grow from about 2 to 3 feet (61-91 cm.) tall and wide, while English lavender stays much smaller and more compact, although it may grow up to 2 feet (61 cm.). Bloom time. The flowers on these plants are similar in size, but they last much longer on French lavender. This variety has one of the longest

bloom times, starting in spring and continuing to produce flowers throughout the summer. Scent. If you're looking for the characteristic lavender smell, choose English lavender. It produces the strong scent that permeates the air, while French lavender has a much lighter scent, which while nice, is more reminiscent of rosemary.



French Lavender

Other Types of Lavender – French and English are just two of many varieties of this popular plant. You'll also see Spanish lavender, which like French lavender has a softer scent and is used more for landscaping than for producing the scented oil. Lavandin is a hybrid cultivar that was developed to produce even more oil than English lavender, so it has a very potent aroma. French and English lavender varieties are both great plants, but they are not the same. Along with the other types of lavender, you have plenty of options to choose the right variety for your home or garden.

Why Those Dandelions in Your Yard Aren't So Bad
extension.sdstate.edu

A perfectly green lawn can be a thing of beauty to certain homeowners. However, it doesn't leave much for pollinators to enjoy. Every year, people work hard using herbicides to keep weeds out of their yards. Some of these weeds, including flowering plants like dandelions, can serve as early season food sources for pollinators. While research has shown that pollinators, specifically honey bees, can't survive on dandelion pollen alone, this doesn't mean that the dandelions aren't still important for pollinators.

During the spring, there are sometimes a limited number of flowering plants. However, dandelions tend to bloom on a consistent basis and can provide at least some sustenance to pollinators until other plants begin to bloom. On sunny days, close inspection of dandelions in a yard will reveal several different pollinators foraging for pollen.

Pollinators often rely on a diverse assemblage of flowers and pollen to meet their dietary needs, so consider holding off on removing dandelions until

other flowers, trees, and shrubs are blooming.

If you do choose to use herbicides to remove dandelions, make sure to read and follow all label directions. Pay close attention to required personal protective equipment, and re-entry intervals (especially if children and/or pets use the lawn).

The Hummingbird-Spider Connection backyardwildlifeconnection.com

To many, hummingbirds and spiders represent a classic example of beauty and the beast. In spite of that, spiders play a key role in the life of the ruby-throated hummingbird. The thing that bonds these two very different creatures together is the spider web.

Spider webs are extremely strong, sticky, and flexible. Remarkably, based on weight, the strength of the web's high tinsel strands is equal to steel. Spiders use their amazing webs to capture food.

The ruby-throated hummingbird visits spider webs to steal small insects that are captured by the web's sticky fibers. In addition, they will also actually prey on small spiders.

When the female rubythroat is building her nest, she plucks bits of the web to construct her nest. In fact, spider webs are one of key materials used in nest construction. The fibers help anchor the nest to the limb on which it is built. They also cement the other construction materials that form the nest. In addition, the stretchy fibers allow the nest to expand. This is extremely important as it helps prevent rapidly growing young hummers from falling out of the nest.

Spider webs also pose a risk to hummingbirds. Each year countless hummingbirds become ensnared when they become entangled in a spider web as they try to glean nesting material or food. In addition, others accidentally fly into a spider web spread across a woodland path or bed of flowers.

When this happens, the likelihood of a hummingbird escaping a spider web is slim. In some cases, when a spider senses a bird is caught in its web it will crawl to the bird and rapidly wrap it up in webbing just as it would a beetle or butterfly.

In other instances, the spider simply allows the bird to struggle until it dies. When this occurs, spiders will often cut an entrapped bird loose from the web and let it fall to the ground.

If an ensnared hummingbird is extremely lucky, somebody will notice the bird and attempt to set it

free. In the vast majority of the cases, if the bird is found soon enough, it can be saved.

Should you ever find a hummingbird struggling in a spider web, immediately remove it. Take the bird to a cool, shady location and remove ALL of the fibers adhering to the bird's body. This process can take several minutes. Whatever you do, do not squeeze the bird as you are working. Simply hold it loosely in one hand and gently peel away the tacky threads using a pair of tweezers.

Once you have finished, hold the bird in your hand, and allow it to drink hummingbird nectar offered in the plastic lid to a soft drink bottle. Dip the bill into the liquid. In most cases, the bird will immediately extend its tongue into the fluid and begin feeding. Never leave the bill in the liquid for any length of time.

Feeding the bird before it is released will enable the hapless bird to regain some of the energy it expended while struggling for its life.

When the hummingbird seems to have regained its strength, place the bird on the palm of your hand. When it is ready to fly, it will suddenly begin rapidly beating its wings and fly away.

If the bird doesn't immediately respond after you have removed all of the spider webs from its feathers, place it in a brown paper bag and loosely fold the top of the bag. Place the bag in a cool place. Then check on the bird from time to time. Once the hummingbird begins fluttering inside the bag, you know it is ready to be released.

Believe me it is truly rewarding to see a hummingbird you rescued from certain death fly away.

Myrtle's MUSINGS

- Check out www.fox10tv.com to see their coverage of the Fuzzy Butts Event led by our own Debra Morrow. As you know, Fuzzy Butts is an initiative started by the Herb Society of America to gather data on bees visiting local native plants/herbs and send the data to Herb Society of America in an effort to help preserve bees and native herbs, and thereby help preserve us humans. Debra put the local program together from scratch, and you can see from the report that the local kids participating were having fun but taking it seriously as well. There were 22 students from various local schools participating. What a great event, thank you Debra and thank you to those you recruited to help put on the program.

-Pat Ivie

- If you are a member of the Gardens, you may have seen the emails about the passing of Nita Crandall and the memorial that was given for her this past Saturday. Not only did she wear many hats for the Gardens, she was a LONG TIME member and supporter of the Herb Society, serving as President and helping with the transformation of the Herb Garden from creosote timber beds to the brick and trellis feature we have today. She donated the central fountain in memory of her husband "Corky". She had her favorite plants in the Herb Garden, the Jerusalem sage with its beautiful seed heads, the Lady Banks rose on the Pergola and the huge fig tree, which came down during the soggy rains we had last year. She said it was like losing an old friend. So I am happy to see fig branch growing from the trunk and trying to come back. I would stop in her office on many a Friday to pick her brain on the history of the Herb Garden and its plants and how to care for them. She helped me not be afraid of trying new plants and to look at plants in a new way. "A weed is just a plant growing where you don't want it to" was

a favorite saying. Her definition of an herb was "any plant that is useful". I will miss her insight and funny with and I hope to return to the Herb Garden and help maintain it in her memory



And speaking of the Herb Garden, I want to thank and commend the bed captains and volunteers who worked so hard this spring. It looks fantastic!! The bee balm and echinacea are blooming in the medicine bed and I love the artemisia and mint in the pots. All the beds look so good!! Thank you for your efforts and I hope to see you at our next meeting or Alicia's get together.

-Annie Daniels, Treasurer, Gulf Coast Herb Society

“DILL”-ICIOUS Lavender Shortbread with Lemon Glaze ~ whiskaversebaking.com

These cookies combine rich, buttery shortbread with a light floral flavor. Topped with a tangy lemon glaze, they are perfect for your next teatime spread. Servings 30 cookies

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|---------------------------------------|--|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| • 1-1/2 cups unsalted butter softened | • 2 tablespoons culinary lavender buds | flour | <i>Glaze (optional)</i> |
| • 2/3 cup granulated sugar | • 1/2 teaspoon vanilla bean paste | • 1/2 cup cornstarch | • 2 cups powdered sugar |
| • 1/4 cup powdered sugar | • 2-1/2 cups all-purpose | | • 5 tablespoons lemon juice |

1. Place culinary lavender buds into a blender and pulse until they have transformed into a fine powder Add granulated sugar and pulse 2-3 times, until the sugar is slightly more fine and the two are thoroughly combined.
2. Cream together butter, lavender sugar, and powdered sugar. Beat in vanilla bean paste.
3. In a separate bowl, combine cornstarch, flour, and salt. Slowly mix this into your lavender batter.
4. Split your dough in half. Form each half into a log roughly 1-1/2 inches in diameter. Wrap the logs in plastic or wax paper and chill in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour. (Longer is better)
5. Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. After the dough has been chilled, remove from the refrigerator and slice each log into 1/2 inch thick cookies using dental floss or a sharp knife.
6. Transfer sliced cookies to a prepared baking sheet. Bake for 12-18 minutes, watching closely. The cookies are done when the edges just begin to turn brown.
7. Remove cookies from the oven and transfer to a wire rack to cool.
8. While the cookies are cooling, prepare your glaze. Whisk together lemon juice and powdered sugar in a small bowl. Pour glaze over cooled cookies. Garnish cookies with lemon zest and lavender flowers, if you so desire.

GCHS Officers 2024 – 2025

President ~ Annie Daniels • President-Elect ~ Beth Poates • Recording Secretary ~ Martha Adams
 Programs/Photograph ~ Vacant • Treasurer ~ Annie Daniels • Historian ~ Vacant • Ways & Means ~ Alicia Davis
 Parliamentarian ~ Vacant • Herb Bed Coordinator ~ Annie Daniels • Newsletter Editor ~ Qjuana & Richard Cooney

GULF COAST HERB SOCIETY Calendar of Activities 2024

- May 28, 5:30 pm. GCHS Meeting at MBG
 - June 25, 5:30 pm. GCHS Meeting at MBG
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MOBILE BOTANICAL GARDENS Calendar for 2024

EVENTS/ SOCIAL (for more info [CLICK HERE!](#))

MBG Board of Directors. Regular Meeting. The third Tuesday of each month, 5pm – 6:30pm. The Executive Board meets at 5:00pm and the full Board at 5:15pm.

Spring Hill Garden Club. Regular Meeting and Lunch. 4th Wednesday of every month. 10am - 1pm. They have a business meeting followed by a topic presentation. Ends with lunch by Georgia Roussos Catering.

Lunches at the Gardens. Lunch with dessert and drink included. Wednesdays and Fridays, 11:30 – 12:30 . The Botanical Center at Mobile Botanical Gardens. Catered by Georgia Roussos Catering. Menus are posted monthly and are \$12.50 to \$15.00 per person, tax included. Select meal and pay.

MarketPlace at MBG. Open each Saturday morning through the end of May. 9am - 11am. Great plants for your Gulf Coast Garden! Located at the end of our primary parking lot.

CLASSES (for more info & Registration [CLICK HERE!](#)).

Writers In Nature with Sue B. Walker. Wednesday mornings 10am - Noon. The Larkins Classroom. A Writing group under direction of Sue B. Walker Members of the group meet weekly to discuss creative writings.

Tales and Trails in the Gardens. Thursdays, 10:30am - 11:30am. A Literacy program of reading books and sharing activities. Designed for preschoolers and homeschoolers. FREE to MBG members, registration is required. All children must be have by parent or assigned adult guardian. Email Aeriell (acashin@mbgardens.org) 251.342.0555.

Sketch Club in the Gardens. First Friday of the Month, 10:30am-11:30am. The Larkins Classroom OR at Magnolia Hill Studio. Cost: FREE. A Casual sketch club experience with oversight from Derek Norman, our MBG Artist in Residence.

Qi Gong / Tai Chi at MBG. Spring Session IV When: Tuesday and Friday mornings, 9am-10am. Outdoor sites at Mobile Botanical Gardens Instructor: Alla Zakharova Cost: \$56 - 8 sessions (students will receive a punch card).

PRESENTATIONS (for more info [CLICK HERE!](#))

GCHS Food Team Duties

- Make sure kitchen tables and counters are clean
- No food left in fridge
- Pick any trash off floor
- Clean spills from floor
- Take out garbage & place new - bags in cans bags are on to fridge
- If table and chairs are to be put up we will let you know - if not they can be left out
- Make sure all doors are locked
- Thermostats must be left as you found them



GULF COAST HERB SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP FORM

New Member? Y N

Name: _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Email _____ (to receive our Newsletter and updates)

Committees I am interested in: _____ Herb Garden _____ Membership _____ Herb Day

Yearly dues are \$25 and payable in August.

Please make check payable to GCHS and mail % Annie Daniels, 1355 Carson Rd W, Mobile, AL 36695

Or bring your check or cash to one of our meetings

Date _____ Amount \$ _____ Paid by Cash _____ or Check # _____

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

Welcome to the Gulf Coast Herb Society! We meet at the Mobile Botanical Gardens from 5:30 to 7:00pm the fourth Tuesday of the month, unless otherwise announced in our newsletter, emails and Facebook.

Refreshments are served at each meeting, it's optional to bring something to share.

Meetings start at 5:30p.m., program will follow, work days in Herb Garden TBA

Questions? Email Beth Poates at poates57@gmail.com or

Annie Daniels, at mbdmobile@aol.com.

Check out our website www.gulfcoastherbsociety.org Like us on Facebook!

